

XVI.—*The Hares of Crete and of Cyprus.*

By G. E. H. BARRETT-HAMILTON.

PAYMASTER H. O. JONES, R.N., to whom the British Museum is indebted for specimens both of the beech-marten and the badger of Crete, has now sent me four examples of the hare of that island. These cannot be assigned to any known form of hare inhabiting the shores of the Mediterranean or its islands. I therefore propose for them the name of

Lepus creticus, sp. n.

Size about equal to that of *L. europæus occidentalis*, de Winton. Dorsal underfur white. Long hairs of upper surface annulated with black and very light buff rings, the tips black. Towards the rump the buff becomes white, the whole coat silky, and the black rings inconspicuous, so that the rump is distinctly marked off by its colour from the remainder of the upper surface. Very little trace of rufous intervenes on the flanks between the colours of the upper and under surfaces. The nuchal patch, throat, breast, thighs, and anterior surfaces of the fore legs are buff, this colour extending in some specimens to the belly in the neighbourhood of the thighs. The remainder of the under surface and of the legs, together with the chin, are white. The upper surface of the head resembles the back, but is slightly darker, and here the underfur is buff. The cheeks and sides of the head are grizzled and nearly white. The ears are tipped with black and are nearly white on the posterior external surface, as well as in their interior and along the margins; the anterior external surface is coloured like the back.

The exact proportions of the animal are uncertain, since no measurements accompanied the specimens.

Four examples were forwarded, of which the particulars are as follows. The dimensions are in millimetres, and were taken from the dried specimens:—

Brit. Mus. no.	Hind foot.	Ear.	Basal length of skull.
99. 2. 14. 1	125	105	73 { *
99. 2. 14. 2	124	101	76 {
2. 11. 9. 1, 27th Feb., 1901	}	}	78
(type of species)			81
2. 11. 9. 2, ditto	

The description of *Lepus creticus* is not intended to be complete, but simply to be sufficient for its distinction from other

* These two skins were purchased in open market. It is uncertain to which skin either skull belongs.

forms. There are so many Mediterranean hares, and so little is known of them, that it would be as yet impossible to state the exact affinities of any. *Lepus creticus* is a pale form, readily distinguishable from all those inhabiting neighbouring regions by its light-coloured rump. In this respect, although by no means in the remainder of its coloration, it resembles British winter examples of *L. europæus occidentalis*.

The opportunity may here be taken to describe the hare of Cyprus—a small form allied in colour to that of Crete, but lacking the light rump. As in *L. creticus*, the underfur, except on the head, is white, but the buff of the upper surface is slightly yellowish and the black browner than in that species. The nuchal patch, throat, breast, thighs, and anterior surface of the fore legs are more rufous, and the cheeks are tinged also with that colour. There is no white on the ears. The animal is altogether less pale than *L. creticus*. It may be known as

Lepus cyprius, sp. n.

As in the case of *L. creticus*, this note is without prejudice to future investigation, which may indicate, more accurately than is now possible, exact specific or subspecific affinities.

I have seen three examples of *L. cyprius*, all of which were presented to the British Museum by the late Lord Lilford. They are without dimensions.

		Basal length of skulls averages	} All three skulls are much damaged.	
78. 7. 3. 5 (type of species).	Cyprus.	} 70 mm.		
— 6.	"			
— 7.	"			

It is noteworthy that the moderately light coloration of the hare of Crete is paralleled by that of the badger, *Meles meles mediterraneus**, of the same island.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

Dr. Günther's Monograph of the Reptiles and Batrachians of Central America.

Biologia Centrali-Americana.—Reptilia and Batrachia.

By ALBERT GÜNTHER. London, 1885-1902. Pp. xx & 326; 76 pls.

OUR first duty in noticing an elaborate and sumptuously illustrated volume like the one before us is to congratulate the learned author on the completion of his task, and the patience with which he has continued his labours for more than fifteen years. The reasons for

* See Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. ser. 7, vol. iv. (Nov. 1899) pp. 383-4.